



Friends of the Earth Pembrokeshire Cyfeillion y ddaear Sir Benfro

Newsletter October 2023

Wales' last opencast coal mine proposal turned down in historic decision

Carmarthenshire councillors put nature and climate first, by saying no to further opencast coal mining at Glan Lash opencast mine in Carmarthenshire.

Around 50 local people and campaigners had gathered on the steps of the Carmarthenshire County Hall ahead of the planning meeting to oppose the mine.



Where fossil fuel sites are — you might be surprised

Even before Rishi Sunak took an axe to green policies last week, he was busy trying to revive the dying fossil fuel industry. The Rosebank oil field is part of his plan to max-out oil and gas in the North Sea. But do you know the extent of onshore fossil fuel projects in the

pipeline too?

Find out where else fossil fuel sites could be hiding in plain sight using our new interactive map. It shows all the proposed and active onshore oil, gas and coal sites in England and Wales:

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/fossil-fuel-map-where-are-onshore-extraction-sites-england-and-wales?>

Microplastics testing – bring your sample

Over 50 organisations, including Friends of the Earth Cymru, have signed a letter to Welsh Government asking them to act on the growing problem of microplastics. A petition has also been delivered to the Sennedd, which most of us will have signed.

Pembs FoE bought a microplastics testing kit and had fun testing sand and gravel from a few places in Pembrokeshire, not surprisingly finding microplastic in all of them. They came from beaches, fords in a small stream, and riversides. We will take the kit and samples to events over the coming months.

You can bring your own sample of sand along to the film on 3 December (see below). Collect a small amount, a spoon full is enough. Dry out on a piece of paper, and put into a glass jar, labelling with place and date.

For a very good range of actions that the Welsh Government could take see the list here

<https://foe.cymru/waste-and-consumption>

Ideas include:

- [Bring forward the zero waste target from 2050 to 2030, not 2050](#)
- [Introduce a Latte Levy](#)
- [Introduce a new world-first Sustainable Baby Box in Wales](#)
- Launch a new Zero Waste Communities scheme
- [Set up a sustainable fashion task force](#)

Hospital waste

During COVID any ideas about restricting plastic waste were put aside, as masks, aprons, gloves were disposed off on mass. Day to day the NHS continues to dispose of endless plastic gloves and aprons in their care of patients. Splints and braces used in the support of leg injuries in casualty are not reused. Has anyone any suggestions what I could do with a discarded leg brace?

Eleanor

Egnio 2023

This year Egnio, the meet up for local group members in FoE Cymru, took place in Swansea. Topics discussed included effective campaigning and how to get our views across, micro plastics, warm homes.

In the afternoon there was a very interesting presentation on the latest campaign, People and Planet over Profits. The aim of this campaign is to highlight the role of big business in the exploitation of resources resulting in deforestation, pollution and CO2 and methane emissions which are driving climate change. This exploitation is also associated with land grabbing and human rights abuses, particularly of indigenous peoples' rights.

Over the coming months Friends of the Earth are campaigning against Unilever's use of conflict palm oil from Indonesia. They are also campaigning for a new UK Business, Human Rights and Environment Act which would force companies in the UK to consider the impact of their activities on both the environment and human rights. The UN has called for such legislation and the UK is lagging behind others such as France Germany and New Zealand. While, as the UK government claims, there are some protections under the current Environment Act and Anti-slavery legislation, it is patchy and hard to enforce. 43 MP's and 7 peers including Ben Lake MP Plaid Cymru Ceredigion, have signed the Good Business Matters pledge.

We also heard about SLAPP suits (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) which are used by big corporations to silence environmental groups who are objecting to their activities. These lawsuit commonly take the form of a defamation suit. In the UK the onus is on the defendant to prove that what is written is true and not defamatory. The plaintiff often does not expect to win, the intention is merely to force the defendant to withdraw their criticism by intimidation and mounting legal costs. SLAPP suits may also be effective in putting up the cost of insurance for

environmental groups and they may work by deterring others from joining in with campaigns.

Examples included the timber giant Samling which attempted to sue Save Rivers for defamation when they highlighted Samlings logging of Indigenous lands and primary rainforest without consent.

Buses

We understand that the Haverfordwest Public Transport Interchange project (including a new bus station) has been delayed due to lacking a construction contractor and have written to County Councillor Marc Tierney regarding this issue. He has asked Pembrokeshire County Council's cabinet for a response, which we await with interest. We also raised concerns with Cllr. Tierney about who would decide where buses would run in future under the Welsh Government's plans for new legislation to radically reshape the bus system. Will the local population have a say?

2023 is shaping up to be a bad year for bus services in Pembrokeshire. The 430 service between Cardigan and Narberth, which for many years (except for a week-long special timetable during the Urdd Eisteddfod in 2013) has run three times a day (Monday-Saturday), was cut to just twice a day from late July. From October 29th, the hourly 349 service (Haverfordwest-Tenby via Neyland and Pembroke Dock) is to be reduced to running every 90 minutes and the demand-responsive 'Bwcabus' services expected to be withdrawn completely on 31st October.

The contract for another service, the T5 between Cardigan and Haverfordwest (via Fishguard) expires early next year, on 31st January 2024. With this sombre backdrop of cuts, we would be interested to hear what you think – is it better to put all available funding into serving one route hourly (and withdraw all services from other small towns and villages) or to split the subsidy between routes (so more places get buses, but only every two hours)?



The Fflecsi Bwcabus scheme was set to end on this 31 October, despite new vehicles being bought for it in July.

At the beginning of this year Transport for Wales (TfW) began expanding the fflecsi service to connect villages and hamlets in the Dale Peninsula to Milford Haven and Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire, in partnership with Pembrokeshire County Council. It linked up with the fflecsi service in north-west Pembrokeshire which has seen an increase in passenger demand since it began operating in September 2020 allowing more communities across the county to benefit from demand responsive transport, integrating with wider public transport routes.

Together, the two zones cover a large portion of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, offering visitors to the area an accessible, environmentally friendly transport alternative to some of the county's most popular destinations, including the Wales Coastal Path. Fflecsi Pembrokeshire is a demand responsive bus service which does not have a fixed route and timetable but an operating zone which enables passengers to be picked up and dropped off anywhere within that fflecsi zone. Rather than passengers waiting at a bus stop for a bus to turn up, they can **book a journey in advance using the fflecsi app, or by calling 0300 234 0300**. Passengers are informed where to catch the bus and at what time it will be arriving – the pick-up point will be near as possible to the location of the passenger.

Andrew Sherrington, Head of Bus Network and Service Development, said: "Passenger numbers continue to grow and in August and September of this year, figures were more than double what they were for those months in 2021. "We know that fflecsi is highly valued by the rural communities it serves across Pembrokeshire, and it is a vital part of TfW's commitment to providing a multi-modal transport network that encourages more people to make use of public transport."

In spite of all this and the expansion of the bus fleet in July, the fflecsi Bwcabus service was due to finish on October 31 after the Welsh Government funding through the Rural Development Programme ended. Pembrokeshire County Council has secured a replacement for the service with operator Richards Bros. until March 31st 2024

Petition launched to secure fair rail funding for Wales

<https://nation.cymru/news/petition-launched-to-secure-fair-rail-funding-for-wales/>

"Without being overly dramatic, Wales has and continues to lose out on billions of pounds of necessary rail investment. The broad brush ratio of UK Government rail enhancement investment commitments in England v Wales of 200:1 is politically, constitutionally, economically and environmentally unacceptable." Prof Mark Barry, transport expert, Cardiff University.

The petition itself is here:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/645076>

Climate Emergency UK Climate Action Scorecards

This year Climate Emergency UK amassed over 100 volunteers on a citizen science data project to score all UK councils' written Climate Action Plans. It is the first time council's plans have been assessed. Nearly one fifth of UK councils have still not submitted an action plan.

The 28 questions assessed included whether the climate actions are costed; do the actions have a clear goal; are local residents being engaged with climate action; does the Plan include strategies to decarbonise waste, planning, homes and other services that the council is responsible for; does it go beyond cutting the council's own emissions and plan to work with others to cut the whole area's emissions, and does the Plan cover areas such as re-skilling the workforce, climate education, governance and funding for climate action

The best performing single tier council is Westminster City with an overall score of 69%. Pembrokeshire scored 29%, putting it to the mid-bottom of the table. The council performed satisfactorily on waste reduction and food but poorly on governance and finance.

Friends of the Earth Pembrokeshire will be discussing these results over forthcoming meetings to inform campaigning strategy into 2024.

For more information and to see the full results head to:

<https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/councils/pembrokeshire-county-council/>

Dwr Cymru admits to illegal sewage

On Friday 20th October news broke that Welsh Water have admitted to illegally spilling sewage at treatment works for a number of years. These include Cardigan, where the sewage was 'some of the worst ever seen', according to Prof Hammond, who used the water companies own data to prove they were illegally spilling.

The regulator, Natural Resources Wales, has been aware of the issues but so far no fines have been issued.

In 2025, a new treatment plant for Cardigan will be installed, but local citizens are angry that both the water company and the regulator have failed to be held accountable for so long.

More information visit the Save the Teifi campaign group: <https://teifi.one>

Pengelli extension for the Wildlife Trust

This summer the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales ran an appeal to secure funding to purchase land to extend the Pengelli forest.

Pengelli is part of the largest block of ancient Oak woodland in West Wales and is one of the few remaining areas of temperate rainforest in the UK.

Thanks to the generosity of members, local people and funders the appeal was successful and 44.5 acres of land will now be protected. The Trust plans to continue to secure additional land near to Pengelli to create a temperate rainforest corridor to provide the best possible conditions for wildlife.

To find out more visit: <https://www.welshwildlife.org>

The book for more background and enthusiasm for this fantastic ecosystem: **Guy Shrubsole 'The Last Rainforests of Britain'** – winner of the Wainwright prize for nature writing 2023

Food Festival Newport Pembrokeshire

Check out the fantastic programme here: <https://grwp.org/newport-food-festival/>

Pembrokeshire FOE contact details:

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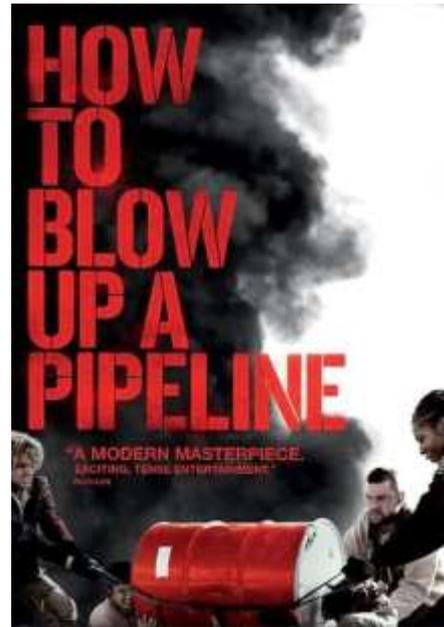
Website www.foepembrokeshire.co.uk

Facebook Pembrokeshire Friends of the Earth

Email info@foepembrokeshire.org.uk

Showing: 3rd December 2023

[How to Blow up a Pipeline](#)



Presented by Friends of the Earth.

A crew of young environmental activists execute a daring mission to sabotage an oil pipeline. Daniel Goldhaber's taut and timely thriller is part high-stakes heist, part radical exploration of the climate crisis. Based on the controversial book by Andreas Malm.

This is part of Film on Sunday and will be showed at Templeton Village Hall, 3 Dec, 7.30 pm

SAVE THE DATE: 9th DECEMBER - GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

From 30 Nov to 12 Dec, world leaders will be gathering for the Conference of Parties (COP), hosted and presided over by the United Arab Emirates. We don't expect the COP processes to provide the solutions, but we still need to tackle the climate catastrophe. So, **the Day of Action will be a vital moment to build the strength of our movement** across the UK and the globe.

